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A VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION IN THE ELABORATION OF THE HISTORY
OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION IN
THE PERIOD OF THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR

- USSR -

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A VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION IN THE ELABORATION OF THE HISTORY
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[Following is a translation of an article by V. A. Vasilenko, G. D. Komkov, and M. Ya. Raskat in the Russian-language periodical Voprosy istorii KPSS (Problems of the History of the CPSU), Moscow, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1960, pages 144-154.]

The Great Patriotic War has no equal in world history for scale and effort. It occupies a special place also in the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. These were years of the mortal struggle of the Soviet people against the imperialist invaders. Involved was the fate of our socialist achievements, the state independence of the Soviet Union, with the vitality of two opposing social and economic systems being put to the ultimate test.

The successful destruction of the striking power of imperialism was achieved thanks to the fact that there stood at the head of the Soviet people, who had completed the building of socialism, the heroic Communist Party, which confidently led the people from their initial reverses, through all obstacles, to the heights of a world historical victory.

Exceptionally great difficulties confronted the collective of authors of the book Istoriya Kommunisticheskoy partii Sovetskogo Soyuza [History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union] in writing Chapter 15, "The Party in the Period of the Great Patriotic War." These difficulties involved, first of all, the lack of subject elaboration, the necessity to study a tremendous amount of documentary material, and to subject to scientific research a wide complex of questions relating not only directly to the leading role of the CPSU, but to the entire Patriotic War. A certain degree of difficulty was due to the fact that this so complex a subject had to be expounded very briefly--in essence, in summary form.

As has already been justifiably noted by the press, the textbook's collective of authors coped successfully with the tasks placed before them. In our opinion, this over-all evaluation can, with complete foundation, be applied also to Chapter 15 of the book - a chapter which represents a significant contribution to literature on the history of the Party.

A characteristic feature of the book's elucidation of the Party's activities during the war is its comprehensive coverage of subjects, preserving it from schematicism and over-simplification. The chapter deals learnedly with a broad circle of questions, and treats the most important of them in sufficient detail. As is known, modern war represents a test of all the material and moral qualities of all people; it is not only an armed struggle, but an economic, political, and ideological struggle. That is why the authors of the textbook, in singling out the important aspects of the war, view them in their actual interdependence and vital intermeshing, which were different during the various periods of the war.

The core of the chapter's contents, naturally, is disclosure of the directing activity of the CPSU. Here the authors proceeded on the basis that the Party, in the years of struggle against the Fascist invaders, steadfastly followed the line of an uninterrupted unity of the rear and front lines, of people and army, of the conversion of the entire nation into a single armed camp. The chapter clearly and fully portrays the patriotic role of the Communist Party.

Throughout the entire war the CPSU consistently conducted a policy directed towards the destruction of the imperialist aggressors. No matter what aspect of the Soviet Government's activities one chooses--military, economic, ideological, foreign policy--the all-conquering force of the Party's policy, its inexhaustible and ebullient energy is manifested throughout. In our nation there was no aspect of work which was not affected by the influence of the Party. Military units and partisan detachments, factories and plants, kolkhozes and sovkhoses, state organs and scientific institutions, daily felt the firm directing hand of the Party and carried out its will. In its turn, the Party learned from the people, generalized upon their experience, and again introduced that experience into the masses.

The chapter demonstrates convincingly how the Communist Party sagaciously carried out the direction of the nation and how it confidently led the people to a victory over the enemy. The political perspicacity and the organizational talent of the Party lay in the fact that, at every stage of the war, it knew how to locate the basic link in the over-all chain of historic events and how to concentrate its forces on the most important sectors of the front. The Party always found the proper organizational forms and methods of ideological and political action for the mobilization of the masses towards the resolution of important problems. This facilitated the resolution of the totality of the tasks confronting the nation, and the undeviating implementation of the general strategic line of the CPSU which led to complete victory over the enemy.

The many-phased activity of the Party during the war is disclosed in the book through material which is rich in specific detail. In addition to portraying the role of the Central Committee of the

Party, the authors shed light as well on the activities of the central committees of the Communist parties of the union republics, of kray, oblast, and rayon Party committees and primary Party organizations, and disclose new forms and methods of Party political and organizational work. It must be noted at the same time that there is at times, in the exposition of the material, an unfounded leaning towards the recounting of military events, economic questions, etc., to the detriment of the treatment of the history of the CPSU itself. It is apparent that in subsequent editions of the textbook we must once again think through the question of the more expedient correlation of these two plans for the presentation of material.

Among the virtues of the chapter under discussion which we must mention here is its characteristic feature wherein the disclosure of events and facts is organically combined with their generalization. Even the most precise description of the Great Patriotic War and the CPSU's directing role in it is not yet a science, but is only on the threshold. Thus it is possible to achieve a simple photographic representation of reality, a representation which does not reveal the essence of the events depicted, and which leads, inescapably, to a superficial exposition, to empiricism. The high ideological and theoretical level of the chapter was achieved precisely because of the fact that the authors profoundly analyze the character and the course of the Great Patriotic War; they look upon the directing activity of the CPSU not as simply the sum of measures, but as the basic direction of those activities supplementing one another and forming a whole. We have in view, first, the correct policy of the Communist Party, guided by Marxist-Leninist theory; secondly, the ideological-educational and mass political work of the Party; and, thirdly, its organizational activity in the rear and at the front.

The task of combining the depiction of the factual side of events with a generalization upon those events was handled most successfully in the first section of the chapter. Here, in a large scale plan without superfluous details, is presented an unfolding picture of the beginning of the Great Patriotic War. The authors have succeeded in illuminating or highlighting the most important events in the internal life of the Soviet Union, its military and international situation, and in making new and highly interesting generalizations from the many facts.

The chapter consists of seven sections, and divides the history of the Great Patriotic War into five chronological segments: 1) from the treacherous attack upon the Soviet Union to the rout of German fascist forces before Moscow; 2) from the defeat of the fascist army in the winter of 1941-1942, to the historic defense of Stalingrad; 3) the year of the turning point--from the counteroffensive at Stalingrad, to the end of 1943; 4) 1944 as the year of the complete liberation of Soviet soil from the fascist oppressor; 5) 1945 as the year of the defeat and unconditional surrender of Hitler's Germany, and then, of imperialist Japan.

The first three sections review the activity of the CPSU in directing all the efforts of the Soviet people towards repulsing the Hitlerite aggression, and towards preparation of the necessary conditions for the turning point. The fourth section discusses problems connected with the Party's struggle for achieving the turning point in the course of the Great Patriotic War. The fifth and sixth sections show how the Communist Party organized the efforts of the Soviet people for the complete expulsion of the German-fascist invaders from the Soviet Union, the liberation of the peoples of Europe from fascism, and the final defeat of Hitler's Germany and then of militaristic Japan.

In the first section of the chapter the authors show how the Communist Party, quickly converting its activity to a military basis, concentrated its efforts on carrying out mobilization measures, and did everything possible to develop the stubborn and bitter struggle of the people and army for the honor and independence of their socialist motherland. This work was carried out under exceptionally difficult circumstances. Hitler's Germany, treacherously violating the Soviet-German nonaggression pact, invaded the Soviet Union without a declaration of war. The enemy's army began to move towards the nation's vitally important centers. A terrible danger hung over our motherland, and the question of the life and death of the peoples of the USSR was at stake.

In disclosing the drama of those first days of the war, the authors correctly describe the question of the temporary reverses of the Red Army. They note with complete correctness that the Communist Party had devoted serious attention in the years prior to the war to the strengthening of the nation's defensive capabilities. During the years of peaceful construction in the USSR, a mighty material and technical base was created, and the Soviet people possessed tremendous moral and political reserves for the defense of their motherland. In the prewar years there had also been carried on a basic reorganization of the armed forces, an increase in the strength of the army, the considerable strengthening of its military technical base, and the improvement of combat training.

In addition to this, as the book shows, Hitler's Germany enjoyed a number of advantages over the USSR, which made possible the initial successes of the fascist war machine. Among such advantages were: the more powerful, in comparison with the Soviet Union, material technical base of Germany's war industry, which at that time could rely on the economic resources of almost all of Western Europe; the early shift of the German economy onto a war footing; Fascist Germany's opportunity to throw the overwhelming portion of its army against the USSR, an army which had completed its combat activities in Western Europe at that time; the existence of German allies, in the form of a number of reactionary-fascist nations; the mobilization and concentration on the borders of the Soviet Union of a tremendous Hitlerite army of invasion;

that army's almost 2 years of experience in conducting modern war; and, finally, the extraordinarily important role played by Germany's sudden attack upon the Soviet Union.

The new textbook also discloses the basic shortcomings committed in preparing our nation for war on the eve of Fascist Germany's attack. Possessing a mighty material technical base, the Soviet Union was late in shifting its economy to a war basis. The war industry of the USSR had not succeeded by the beginning of the war in initiating the mass production of a series of new types of military equipment. This resulted in the Red Army, Air Force, and Navy not completing their technical rearmament in time. The Soviet armed forces also lacked experienced, well-trained commanders; many of them were unfoundedly removed from the command of troops in 1937-1938. One of the reasons for the belated and insufficient preparation of the nation to ward off the attacks of the enemy's tremendous army was I. V. Stalin's mistaken evaluation of the military-strategic situation prior to the beginning of the war.

On the basis of a careful Marxist-Leninist analysis of the causes for the temporary setbacks of the Red Army, the textbook reaches the important conclusion that the enemy, in addition to the factor of surprise, employed against us another, no less important factor: he had outstripped us in preparing for war, which increased the effect of the factor of surprise many times over. It must be noted that the lessons of the initial period of the Great Patriotic War have particularly important significance at the present time.

From the very first days of the war the Communist Party headed the organization of all of the Party's and the people's efforts for the defense of our socialist accomplishments, and adopted urgent measures directed towards repulsing the enemy decisively. By an ukase of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet USSR, martial law was declared in the European part of the nation, and the mobilization of persons subject to military service within 14 military districts announced. The Party's decisions specified specific paths for the reorganization of economic, state, and educational work. The 27 June 1941 Decree of the Central Committee of the VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)] and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR set forth the task of evacuating the populace and items of material value from front line and other threatened zones. A special decree of the Central Committee VKP(b) and the Sovnarkom called for the organization of people's militia detachments and assault battalions, as well as the unfolding of a partisan struggle in occupied Soviet territory.

In summoning the people to the Great Patriotic War, the Communist Party and the Soviet Government worked out a militant program for a national war. On 29 June 1941, the Central Committee of the VKP(b) and the Council of People's Commissars appealed to Party, Soviet, trade-union, and Komsomol organizations of the front-line oblasts with a special directive, which formulated their wartime tasks. Later, the basic theses of this directive were expounded and expanded by I. V.

Stalin in his radio address of 3 July 1941. The Soviet people received a concrete program for their merciless struggle against the German-fascist invaders, and a great plan for the attainment of victory.

The chapter's first section discloses the basic directions taken by the organizational and ideological-political activities of the Communist Party at the beginning of the war: carrying out the mobilization called by the Soviet Government; shifting the economy onto a war basis; shifting the bases of industrial enterprises and valuable property from the western to the eastern regions; getting the production of evacuated plants under way, and the construction of new enterprises in the east; and strengthening the Soviet armed forces. All of this colossal work was conducted under the direction of the Central Committee, VKP(b), the State Defense Committee, and the Soviet Government.

Local Party organizations carried on tireless organizational and mass political work among the workers. As the textbook points out, there were over 170,000 primary Party organizations in industrial enterprises, in agriculture, in the Red Army, and in institutions at the beginning of the war--organizations which were closely tied in with the national masses. The work of a number of the nation's large Party organizations: those of the Ukraine, Belorussia, Moscow, Leningrad, Stalingrad, and certain others, is particularly well-discussed in the chapter.

An exceptionally great deal of activity was undertaken by the Party in the Red Army and Navy. About one-third of the members and alternate members of the party's Central Committee were assigned to leading posts in the army. As the book informs us, about 48,000 leading Party, soviet, trade-union, and Komsomol workers were sent in to strengthen the army and navy during the first months of the war. Communists were to be found on the most difficult sectors of the front.

Such an elucidation of the CPSU's activities reflects actual conditions and discloses the situation wherein: "in the period of the war, members of the Central Committee, as well as outstanding Soviet commanders, took into their own hands certain aspects of activities both in the rear and at the front, made decisions independently, and through their organizational, political, economic, and war work, together with local Party and soviet organizations, helped the Soviet people achieve victory in the war" ("O Preodolenii kul'ta lichnost i yego posledstviy." Postanovleniye TsK KPSS ot 30 iyunya 1956 goda. Spravochnik partiynogo rabotnika ["On Eliminating the Personality Cult and Its Consequences," the 30 June 1956 Decree of the Central Committee CPSU. The Party Worker's Handbook], Moscow, 1957, p. 329).

It must be noted that, in discussing the activity of the Party in the army, the authors of the textbook have committed an error. The book says that "political sections were created under military councils to direct Party-political work in army units." (Istoriya Kommunisticheskoy partii Sovetskogo Soyuza [A History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union], Moscow, 1959, p. 526. Future references to this work

will be cited in the text of the article.) Actually, no political sections ever existed under military councils. The activity of Red Army political organs during the war was directed by the Main Political Administration of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, which functioned as a section of the Central Committee of the CPSU.

The History of the CPSU profoundly treats the question of the character of the Great Patriotic War. Without confining itself to the assertion that the war of the Soviet Union against Hitler's Germany was a war of liberation and a just one, the book's authors disclose the inner content of that given concept. In analyzing the class essence of the world war, the authors tie it in with the political ideas of the powers struggling against Hitler's Germany, thus also disclosing the reasons for the unification of a number of capitalist nations with a socialist nation in an anti-Hitler coalition.

The Soviet people set as their task the defense of the honor, freedom, and independence of their socialist motherland, as well as aid to the peoples of Europe in helping them to free themselves from the yoke of German imperialism, to cooperate with them in the restoration of the national independence of their nations. The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union against Fascist Germany was not the usual war between two states. Involved in this war was a struggle to the death between the new social structure -- socialism, before whom lay the historic future, and the most reactionary imperialist state -- Fascist Germany, threatening peoples with not only enslavement but destruction.

The authors note that the American and British imperialists, in entering into an anti-Fascist coalition, did not cease being enemies of socialism. In contrast with the USSR and to the detriment of the interests of the broad national masses, British and US ruling circles did not set as their aim the complete defeat of German Fascism. Their intentions also did not include the liberation of Germany and other nations from the rule of reactionary forces. They sought chiefly for the elimination of Germany and Japan from the world market as their most dangerous competitors. The sole real power capable of barring Fascist Germany's path to world domination was the Soviet Union. Great Britain and the USA considered it advantageous for themselves to go together with the Soviet Union against a general and very dangerous enemy. Nor should we also forget, of course, the fact that the positions of the governments of Great Britain, the USA, and other capitalist nations were being subjected to the tremendous influence of the mighty movement of the broad strata of the masses against fascism, a movement headed by the Communists.

Thus, the Soviet Union's participation in the war, which played a decisive role in the defeat of Fascist Germany, and the growth of the national liberation movement of the peoples of European and Asian nations occupied by the German and Japanese invaders, cut off the feeble reactionary impulses of the ruling circles of the USA and Great Britain, and aided in the strengthening of the anti-Hitler coalition.

In disclosing the specialness of the Great Patriotic War, the authors of the book make a comparison with the civil war of 1918-1920, and then reach some very interesting conclusions. Both the civil war and the Great Patriotic War were a continuation of the policy of the liberation of the workers and peasants. Both those wars were just wars, wars of liberation. The civil war had already demonstrated the close ties between Soviet power and the national masses, who wholeheartedly supported the government of a proletarian dictatorship. The civil war, however, was waged against a unification of forces from without and a counterrevolution from within, at a time when exploiting classes existed in Soviet Russia, and at a time when, together with these classes, there existed a social base for counterrevolutionary uprisings in the rear of the Red Army. The Great Patriotic War began under conditions of a victorious socialism, when there were no longer any exploiting classes in the nation. History has never known such a war of liberation in which the interests of the people and of the state were so fully and harmoniously intertwined as they were in the Great Patriotic War.

Finally, from the point of view of the class structure of the rear and of its solidarity, the Great Patriotic War differed radically from the war against the German invaders in Western Europe. There, internal reactionary forces, fighting their own people, took the path of national betrayal and aided Hitler to establish a fascist regime in Europe. The USSR's war against Fascist Germany, however, took place under conditions of the moral and political unity of the Soviet people and, from its very inception, was a Patriotic War of the entire Soviet people against the invaders of Hitler.

* * *

The liberative character of the Great Patriotic War and the daily inspiring activity of the Communist Party brought forth unparalleled heroism from the soldiers of the Red Army and from the entire people. With exceptional stubbornness and courage, our Soviet soldiers defended every foot of our Soviet land. Under the difficult conditions of the initial period of the war, they kept up a furious attack against the enemy, and dealt him blows which made themselves felt.

The book relates well the historic defense of Leningrad, Odessa, Sevastopol', and Moscow. Together with regular units of the Red Army, the populace took an active part in the defense of cities. Great aid in the struggle against the enemy was rendered by the partisans, who operated boldly in the rear of the German-fascist forces.

The selfless struggle of the Red Army, supported by all the people, changed the relative strength of forces on the central sectors of the Soviet-German front, created the conditions for a counteroffensive by Soviet troops. An outstanding event of the first period of the Great Patriotic War was the rout of the German fascist invaders in December 1941 at Moscow. It signified the crushing of Hitler's plan for a blitzkrieg, dissolved the myth of the invincibility of the fascist army.

The victory at Moscow instilled in us a firm certitude of the future defeat of the enemy, and had a profound effect upon the growth of the national liberation movement in the European nations.

The defeat of German-fascist forces in the winter of 1941-1942 did not signify, however, that they were not capable of more and large-scale offensive operations. Taking advantage of the absence of a second front and utilizing the colossal material reserves of virtually all of Europe, Hitler's commanders sought to make up for the tremendous losses inflicted upon their armies. In July 1942, the number of enemy divisions on the Soviet-German front was increased to 237, while by the fall of 1942, it had reached 266. Having concentrated tremendous forces on the southern front, the Germans began a large-scale offensive in the summer of 1942. They succeeded in seizing a considerable portion of Soviet territory and in advancing up to Stalingrad. For the Soviet Union there was again created an extraordinarily difficult situation. It was necessary to stop the enemy no matter what the cost, and not to give him the opportunity to paralyze the vital centers of the nation.

The third section of Chapter 15 is devoted to an elucidation of the activity of the CPSU under these difficult conditions. The authors disclose the many-sided activities of the Communist Party in organizing the defense of Stalingrad. At the summons of the Party, the entire nation came to the aid of Stalingrad. To the manly defenders of that Volga stronghold came an uninterrupted flow of trainloads of arms and ammunition, and new combat reinforcements. The Stalingrad party organizations raised its entire populace to a defense of the city, tremendous work was done in the creation of fortified zones, while thousands of Communists and Komsomols flowed into the ranks of the army. An enormous amount of work among the troops was begun by army Party members and political workers.

Systematic Party-political work played an exclusively important role in improving the combat efficiency of the Red Army. The limits of the book did not permit its authors to deal with this important subject on a sufficiently wide scale. We consider it useful, therefore, to acquaint the reader with certain important measures to improve all Party-political work in the army, carried out by the Party in the summer of 1942.

In connection with the penetration of the Germans up to the Volga and into the Northern Caucasus, the Central Committee of the VKP(b), together with the adoption of other measures, carefully analyzed the state of political education work in the army and issued instructions for its improvement. The Central Committee demanded that political organs and Party organizations of the Red Army and Navy improve the level and broaden the scope of Party-political work, step up the political education of troops, explain to them daily the danger of their situation and the need for creating a turning point at the front, and for the defeat and expulsion of the enemy.

The Central Committee of the Party strengthened the apparatus of the Main Political Administration (MPA) of the Red Army. In July 1942, A. S. Shcherbakov, a secretary of the Central Committee of the VKP(b), was appointed head of the MPA. The apparatus of the political administration was filled with political workers who had demonstrated their abilities in the course of the war; this promoted the strengthening of the MPA's living ties with the political organs of the active army. At the same time, there was created under the Main Political Administration a Council For Military-Political Propaganda, composed of such outstanding Party figures and experienced political workers as A.A. Zhdanov, secretary of the Central Committee and member of the Military Council of the Leningrad Front; A. S. Shcherbakov, secretary of the Central Committee and head of the Main Political Administration; members of the Central Committee G. A. Lozovskiy, D. Z. Manuil'skiy, L. Z. Mekhlis, I. V. Rogov, Ye. M. Yaroslavskiy, and others.

Introduced foremost into the activity of political organs was the rendering of all-round aid to regular units and large units in the organization and conduct of political education work with personnel. The center of stress was shifted to mass agitation work, to the education of every soldier. Among the troops, under political sections of fronts and armies, there were created, in addition to lecture groups, groups of full- and part-time agitators; the position of agitator was established in companies and divisions.

To this group of part-time agitators (75 persons) created under the Main Political Administration belonged members of the Central Committee of the Party, deputies to the Supreme Soviet USSR, and outstanding Soviet scholars. Groups of part-time agitators, selected from among the more experienced political workers and commanders, were also created under political administrations of fronts, districts, and political sections of armies. The staff of lower rank agitators was reviewed in all subunits. Promoted to agitator were the better soldiers, capable not only of carrying on agitation work among the troops, but of exerting influence upon them through their personal example.

To satisfy the needs of political work among the troops, the journals Agitator i propagandist Krasnoy Armii [Red Army Agitator and Propagandist] and Bloknot Agitatora [Agitator's Handbook] were created and published in several languages. There was a considerable increase also in the number of front-line newspapers published in the languages of the peoples of the USSR.

The carrying out by the Central Committee, in 1942, of a number of important Party-political measures along with other measures of a military organizational nature, had tremendous significance in the strengthening of the morale of Red Army troops. Especially instructive was the experience in Party-political work received in the historic defense of Stalingrad. Here, under a sharp turn in military events, we see such varied forms of Party-political work as the meeting, lecture, heart-to-heart talk, short Party and Komsomol meetings before battle,

levies, briefings, etc., as well as the flexible exchange of these forms depending upon a change in tasks and the tactical situation. All political work was tied in to the militant appeal: "Not One Step Backward!" Along with all this, the personal example of steadfastness, fortitude, and action in combat served as the most effective means of agitation.

Inspired by the lofty aims of the struggle, our Soviet troops not only withstood the fantastic pressure of the German fascist army, but also ground down its best units. This made it possible for the Red Army to shift over into a decisive counteroffensive. The heroic defense of Stalingrad put an end to the most difficult period of the Great Patriotic War. The Soviet people and their armed forces withstood this difficult test with honor.

As is emphasized in the book, the decisive force providing the entire Soviet people with unprecedented courage was the Communist Party. During the days of the war, it functioned as a single militant organism, never knowing vacillation and discord in its ranks. The inviolable unity of the Communist Party, the monolithic solidarity of its organization about the Central Committee, is the result of important educational work with Party members.

The activity of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as the inspirer and organizer of the national struggle against the enemy, its influence on the masses, the cooperation of Party with the masses depended, to a great extent, on the character of the internal life of the Party, on inner-Party work. The regular convocation of Party meetings and the discussion of topical questions, daily educational work with every Party member and candidate for membership, their ideological strengthening, and the skillful placement of Party cadres unites Communists, strengthens the unity of Party ranks, raises the militancy of Party organizations, and multiplies their ties with the masses.

In studying these important questions, the instructor and propagandist should, in addition to referring to the material contained in the textbook, also refer to certain additional writings. (For a more profound study of the subject "The Party in the Period of the Patriotic War," the following works are recommended: KPSS o Vooruzhennykh Silakh Sovetskogo Soyuza. Sbornik dokumentov. 1917-1958 gg. [CPSU on the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union. A Collection of Documents. 1917-1958], Moscow, 1958; Tel'pukhovskiy, B. S., Velikaya Otechestvennaya voyna Sovetskogo Soyuza 1941-1945 gg. [Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union, 1941-1945], Moscow, 1959; and Shatagin, N. I., Partiya v period Velikoy Otechestvennoy Voyny [The Party in the Period of the Great Patriotic War], Moscow, 1959.)

The Central Committee attached great significance to inner-Party work, improving its forms and adapting them to the tasks of the war. It is well known that many Party organizations did not at once reorganize their work on a war basis. During the first months of the war one could often notice mistaken tendencies in the curtailment of inner-Party work.

A number of Party organizations not only at the front, but at the rear, ceased to call Party meetings, meetings of its aktiv, and weakened its mass agitation work. In connection with this, Central Committee secretaries A. A. Andreyev and A. S. Shcherbakov, in a letter to Stalin in the summer of 1941, sharply raised the question of the need for stepping up Party-political work in wartime. The letter clearly expressed the idea that Party-political work is a most important matter for the Party and so strong a means of strengthening the military might of the motherland that "upon the scale of party work and upon our political agitation hangs the clarity of consciousness of scores of millions of the populace of the Soviet Union, the faith of the people in their forces and in victory over the enemy, the inextinguishable fury of the people in its struggle against the brazen invader, and the desire to win a victory." For successful fulfillment of this important task, "we must do a serious about-face in the direction of the strengthening of inner-Party work, so that Party members on the front and in the rear lines will serve as examples of selflessness."

The Central Committee of the VKP(b) demanded that local party organizations do everything possible to utilize democratic methods of leadership. With the aim of putting these instructions into effect, meetings of Party aktivs and plenums of oblast and city Party committees were held in a number of oblasts. Thus, on 29 September 1941, a meeting of the aktiv of the Moscow Oblast Party Organization was held. A. S. Shcherbakov, Secretary of the Central Committee and of the Moscow Oblast Party Committee, made a report on the status of Party-political work. He noted that certain Party organizations had a one-sided approach towards fulfillment of the task "Everything for the Front!" Caught up in managing the nation's economy, they neglected Party work, and forgot the need to coordinate all their organizational and economic work with daily political activity among the masses. The Party demanded that its Party organizations do everything possible to expand their inner-Party work (see Pravda, 30 September 1941).

The Plenum of the Sverdlovskaya Oblast Party Committee, held in September 1941, placed before its Party organizations the task of "strict adherence to the Party Statutes in all of their inner-Party work, and the conducting, on a regular basis, of plenums of city and rayon Party committees, Party meetings, and meetings of Party aktivs" (Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism and Leninism, under the Central Committee of the CPSU, hereafter referred to as the CPA of the IML, Folio 17, Catalog 22, Storage Unit 2262, sheet 87).

It was proposed that control be increased over the economic activity of administrative enterprises, that the role of Party members as the advance guard in production be elevated, that all Party members be drawn into mass political work among the workers, that outstanding people be aided actively in joining the ranks of the Party, and that young Party members be educated constantly, so as to temper them in the spirit of Lenin.

The Central Committee's concern over the activization of inner-Party work under war conditions produced positive results. With the beginning of 1942 there could be noted in Party organizations everywhere a serious change in the direction of the regular calling of Party meetings, and meetings of *aktivs* and committee plenums. Party organs began to devote greater attention to educational work with Party members, to increasing their role as the advance guard in all sectors of economic and war work. The strengthening of centralism in the years of the war coincided with the development of democratic methods of leadership and of the initiative of the masses.

The Central Committee adopted a series of measures directed at an uninterrupted increase in Party ranks, paying special attention to the creation of full-blooded army Party organizations. With this in mind, preferential conditions for entering the Party were created in the front lines of the Patriotic War. It was decided, on 19 August 1941, to accept into the Party Red Army soldiers and commanders who had distinguished themselves in battle, upon the recommendation of three Party members (who themselves had been members at least one year) who had known those recommended for at least one year through their joint work. On 9 December of that same year, the Central Committee of the Party gave permission to Red Army political organs to accept into the Party, after a 3-month period as candidates for membership, military personnel who had distinguished themselves in battle. Realizing that under combat conditions it was difficult and often impossible to call meetings of primary Party organizations to discuss applications for membership which had been submitted, the Central Committee of the VKP(b) decided that enrollment of new members into the Party by army units in the field could be carried out through the bureaus of primary Party organizations, with further approval coming from Party commissions, thus bypassing general meetings of primary organizations.

Execution of the instructions of the Central Committee facilitated a rapid growth in the membership of Party organizations. Thus, where 233,071 persons were accepted as candidates for Party membership during the year prior to the war, that number rose to 751,895 (or more than 3 times) in the first year of the war, from 1 July 1941 to 1 July 1942 (*Pravda*, 19 September 1942). Army and navy Party organizations increased particularly fast. In the first half of 1942, as compared with the same period for 1941, acceptance of members and candidates for membership in army Party organizations increased from 66,931 to 431,850. The growth in the ranks of army Party members was even greater in the second half of 1942, reaching 640,238. The over-all number of members accepted into the Party in the army in 1942 was about 80% of the total of new members accepted into the Party throughout the entire nation (*Pravda*, 22 January 1943).

Thus figures on the membership of army Party organizations cited in the textbook (pp. 526, 548) are derived from two sources. On the one hand, the Party sent thousands upon thousands of Communists

into the army at the beginning of the war and, in addition, army Party organizations increased through the acceptance of new Party members and candidates for membership, the chief source for reinforcement of the ranks of army Party members during the entire course of the war.

Activization of inner-Party work found its concrete expression in selfless labor in the rear and in mass heroism on the field of battle. It promoted a unity of will and action in Party organizations, a precise and timely fulfillment of all instructions of the Central Committee and of the Soviet Government. The correct organization of inner-Party work facilitated, in great measure, the outcome of the struggle against the German fascist invaders.

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As a result of the varied organizational activity of the Party, by the end of 1942 and the beginning of 1943, great achievements were attained in improving our entire war economy. There was a steady increase in war production at enterprises, while new plants working to meet war needs went into operation.

The fourth section of the chapter: "The Party -- Organizer of the Turning Point in the Course of the Great Patriotic War," portrays clearly and convincingly the picture of the selfless labor of the Soviet people in the rear, and the bold and energetic activities of the Red Army. All Soviet people -- in the rear, at the front, in partisan detachments -- applied gigantic effort towards changing the course of the war to the benefit of the Soviet Union.

Economic questions occupy a prominent place in the section. The authors use specific material to demonstrate that successes in the development of the war economy were achieved thanks to the tremendous organizational work of the Communist Party on the economic front. The Party was able to mobilize to the fullest the reserves available to the nation, and to utilize the great advantages of the socialist system of economy. Take, for example, the question of the time needed for reorganizing the economy to meet the needs of the war. In capitalist countries, this process dragged out over many years. In Fascist Germany, switching the economy over to war needs took about 7 years, while it took 4 to 5 years, actually, in the USA and Great Britain. In the Soviet Union, however, under the direction of the Communist Party, the transfer of the national economy onto a war footing under the difficult conditions of the war, took only one year, i.e., several times faster than in Germany, England, and the USA.

Concerned with the all-possible strengthening of the material-technical base of the war economy, the Communist Party devoted a great deal of attention to capital construction. During the war the Soviet people built and put into operation thousands of large industrial enterprises, and created new and powerful centers of leading industry in the eastern regions of the nation. In 1942 alone, there were 10,300 industrial sites in the Urals, Siberia, along the Volga, and in Central Asia. The history of war has never seen such a scale of

construction as was carried out in the Soviet Union during this war. As a result of this, the Soviet war economy had a solid production foundation and was constantly increasing its strength.

The tremendous organizational talent of the Communist Party, its ability to subordinate all of its efforts to the task of defeating the enemy, was reflected to the fullest in the mobilization of the nation's resources. It is well known, for example, that as a result of the loss of a great deal of Soviet territory, that only 8,070,000 tons of steel were cast in the Soviet Union in 1942, while the production of machine tools dropped to 23,000 units. That same year, Hitler's Germany cast 20,460,000 tons of steel, or 32,100,000 tons together with the nations occupied by it. There were 107,000 machine tools produced in Germany that year. Thus the enemy had to his credit a tremendous quantitative superiority in the production of steel and machine tools. Despite that fact, the Soviet Union produced 1.7 times more aircraft and 2.6 times more tanks than did Germany in 1942. Many types of Soviet combat materiel considerably surpassed in quality similar types of the enemy's armament.

The tremendous achievements in the development of the Soviet war economy permitted a sharp increase, even back in 1942, in the production of armaments and ammunition for the front. The Red Army received a sufficient quantity of first-class combat materiel, which permitted it to complete its re-equipment in the second half of 1942. The might of the Soviet armed forces was significantly increased as a result, and there were created the necessary material prerequisites for the Red Army's switch over to a decisive offensive.

On 19 November 1942 there began the renowned counteroffensive of the Red Army at Stalingrad. Through its swift blows from the flanks, the Soviet forces penetrated the enemy's defenses and surrounded an enemy grouping of over 330,000 in the area of Stalingrad. The defeat of German fascist troops at Stalingrad demonstrated to the entire world the invincible power of the Red Army, and laid the beginnings for a turning point in the course of the Great Patriotic War and of the entire Second World War.

The textbook gives the correct evaluation of the effect the historic Stalingrad battle had on the state of the fascist bloc and on the future events of World War II. Hitler's Germany, having suffered defeat, entered upon a deep crisis, from which it could not subsequently emerge. At the same time, there was an increase in the international prestige of the Soviet Union, the anti-Hitler coalition was strengthened, and there was noticeable reinforcement of the national liberation movement in the countries occupied by the fascists.

The defeat of Hitler's troops at Stalingrad was the beginning of a mighty offensive of the Red Army on a tremendous front extending from Leningrad to the North Caucasus. In the course of the winter of 1942-1943, Soviet troops on the various fronts unleashed blows of shattering force upon the enemy. As a result of this, the enemy was thrown back

from the Volga and Terek rivers, forced to retreat 600-700 kilometers to the west, and expelled from many militarily important cities and regions of the nations. Millions of Soviet people again attained freedom and independence. The mass expulsion of the Hitlerites from the Soviet Union began.

Desiring in some degree to correct their situation, the Fascist leaders instituted a "total mobilization" in Germany, and formed a series of new divisions while reinforcing beaten divisions. Part of their troops were removed from other theaters of war and thrown into the Soviet-German front. This permitted Hitler's command to concentrate 257 divisions against the Red Army in the summer of 1943, and to undertake a large-scale offensive at Orel and Kursk.

The section depicts the Party's measures to repulse the enemy offensive, sheds light on new forms of political work among military personnel, and discloses the great significance of the Central Committee's decision of 24 May 1943, "On the Reorganization of the Structure of Party and Komsomol Organizations in the Red Army and the Strengthening of the Role of Front-Line, Army, and Division Newspapers" (see KPSS o Vooruzhennykh Silakh Sovetskogo Soyuza p 337). In connection with this decree, the number of primary Party organizations among the troops increased by 1 1/2 times. Where, prior to this, there were 40,262 primary Party organizations, by 1 July 1943 there were 60,414 (Archives of the Ministry of Defense USSR, Folio 32, Catalogue 231337, Document 9, sheet 172). There were corresponding changes made also in the structure of Komsomol organizations.

In adding to the book's characterization of the 24 May 1943 decree of the Central Committee, VKP(b), its role in the development of the front-line press must be emphasized. Considering the increasing role of the Army press (640 front-line, army, and division newspapers were created in the first 2 years of the war), the Central Committee called upon the Main Political Administration to strengthen and improve the front-line press, to do everything possible to raise its role in the political, military, and cultural education of Red Army personnel, and thus convert the military press into an important center for political work within the army. The reorganization of Party and Komsomol organizations and the strengthening of the army press was looked upon by the Central Committee as an indissoluble whole, as a most important measure whose aim was to bring about (and actually did bring about) a significant revival of inner-Party work, an increase in the Party aktiv, and an improvement in the role of Party and Komsomol organizations in the Red Army.

As a result of the great and fruitful work carried on by the Communist Party, the efforts of the summer offensive of German fascist forces collapsed disgracefully. The Red Army not only repulsed the onslaught of the enemy, but dealt him a crushing defeat at Kursk. From that point on the German fascist army lost forever its capability of waging large-scale offensive operations and was forced to go on the defensive and to retreat along the entire length of the Soviet-German front.

Great aid was rendered the Red Army in its struggle against the fascist occupiers by Soviet partisans. The chapter tells of the combat activity and significance of the partisan movement behind the enemy's lines, organized and directed by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The authors of the book provide an extensive description of the partisan movement, its tasks, and combat activity in section four of the chapter, in relating the events of 1943. This is correct: by that time the partisan movement had attained a tremendous scale. What should have been done, however, if only briefly, was to show the development of this movement, and to point out more specifically how the Communist Party organized and daily directed the all-national struggle of the Soviet partisans.

As early as 18 July 1941 the Central Committee of the VKP(b) adopted the decree "On the Organization of the Struggle in the Rear of the Enemy Forces." This decree stated: "In order to give this struggle behind the enemy forces the widest possible scale and combat activity, it is necessary that the leaders of republic, oblast, and rayon Party and soviet organizations take upon themselves the organization of this matter locally, and personally head this movement" (Archives of the Ministry of Defense USSR, Folio 32, Catalogue 6568, Document 4, sheet 9). Special commissions were created by the Central Committee to direct the activities of oblast, city, and rayon Party organizations in the areas seized by the enemy.

On the basis of the Central Committee's instructions, the Party organizations of front-line areas began the creation of underground Party organizations and of partisan detachments. Thus, in Leningrad Oblast, about 200 partisan detachments and groups were created by 27 July 1941. Fifty-four partisan detachments were operating in Orel Oblast by September 1941. In August 1941, there were 16 detachments in Smolensk Oblast, with their number increasing to 42 in September, with an over-all membership of 3,500 persons. In the Ukraine by October 1941, 23 underground oblast, 63 city, and 564 rayon Party committees had been created (See Tel'pukhovskiy, B. S. Velikaya Otechestvennaya vojna Sovetskogo Soyuza, 1941-1945 gg. [The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union, 1941-1945], p. 99).

This widespread net of underground Party organizations and partisan detachments yielded tangible results even in the first months of the war. Stalin, in his report of 6 November 1941, stated -- and not without foundation -- that the German army "had been forced to create a new rear line in a foreign land laid waste before it by our partisans, which radically disorganizes the supplying of the German army, forces that army to fear for its own rear lines, and kills its faith in the stability of its situation..." (Stalin, I., O Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne Sovetskogo Soyuza [On the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union], Moscow, 1946, p. 22).

The textbook states that the partisan movement strengthened as the Red Army moved towards the west, enveloping more and more new areas (p. 553). This thesis requires explanation. The fact was that, with the Red Army's advance towards the west, the number of temporarily occupied areas was sharply reduced, and tens of thousands of partisans joined the ranks of the Soviet forces. Together with this, the advance of the Red Army disclosed the existence of new partisan detachments, which, up until that time, were not in communication with the staffs of the partisan movement, and brought about an increase in the membership of partisan detachments and units. The fact must be noted that the number of partisans as a whole was increasing even during the time when units of the Red Army were forced to retreat in the first months of the war; the Smolensk and Orel partisans were greatest in size in the spring of 1942, while there were 3 times as many Leningrad partisans in the fall of 1941 than there were in the summer of 1943.

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In showing the decisive role of the Communist Party in the organization of the total liberation of our Soviet land from the fascist occupiers, the authors of the textbook emphasize, in section five of Chapter 15, that the Party called upon the Soviet people and the Red Army not to rest upon their laurels, not to forget about the difficulties ahead, to soberly evaluate the strength of the enemy, and to remember that the complete freeing of Soviet land from the German invaders would require greater effort and new feats from the army and people. In order to fulfill this task, the Soviet people in the rear would have to increase constantly their output of armaments, to improve their quality, to increase their production capabilities, and to restore the national economy in the liberated regions. The authors handle these questions thoroughly, noting that each of the peoples of our great nation contributed their share in the struggle against the German invaders.

In his retreat, the enemy sought, with the aid of nationalists, to sow hatred for the Russian people among the peoples of the Western Ukraine, Western Belorussia, and the Estonian, Lithuanian, and Latvian Soviet Republics, to disrupt the fraternal unity of the peoples of the Soviet Union, and to evoke national differences between them. In this connection, as the book points out, the Party devoted serious attention to the reinforcement of organizational, mass political, and ideological work in the areas liberated from the enemy.

The authors of the chapter pay less attention to the tasks of mass political and ideological work in regions which were not subject to occupation. The CPSU during this period, by the way, struggled consistently with ideological deviations which occurred in a number of Party organizations of rear-line areas, and took decisive measures to strengthen educational work among all Soviet people. We shall deal with this in greater detail.

In 1944, the Central Committee of the Party adopted a decision "On the Status of and Measures for Improving Mass Political and Ideological Work in the Tatar Party Organization" (Propaganda i agitatsiya v resheniyakh i dokumentakh VKP(b) [Propaganda and Agitation in VKP(b) Decisions and Documents], State Publishing House for Political Literature, 1947, p. 463), which noted the neglect of this sector of work, pointed out the serious backwardness of cadres in the study of Marxist-Leninist theory, and exposed serious mistakes of a nationalistic character in the treatment of the history of the Tatar people as well as in Tatar literature and art. Certain historians and literary figures in Tataria were embellishing the role of the Golden Horde, depicting the Tatar-Mongol yoke as a progressive phenomenon, and failing to show sufficiently the oppression of the workers by Tatar feudal lords. Similar errors of a nationalistic character were uncovered in Bashkiria; these were mentioned in the Central Committee's resolution "On the Status of and Measures for the Improvement of Agitation and Propaganda Work in the Bashkir Party Organization" (*ibid.*, p. 479).

Later, the Central Committee of the VKP(b) adopted a decree, in 1944, "On the Organization of Scientific Education Propaganda" (*ibid.*, p. 475), pointing out that propaganda of the natural sciences acquires particularly important significance in the further improvement of the cultural level of broad strata of the workers, and in the elimination of vestiges of lack of culture, superstition, and prejudice. The basic content of scientific education propaganda, the Central Committee resolution stated, should be the explanation of natural phenomena from a materialistic approach, and the explanation of the achievements of science, engineering, and culture.

Finally, in its decree "On Shortcomings in Scientific Work in the Field of Philosophy," adopted in 1944 (*ibid.*, p. 492), the Central Committee subjected to criticism the mistakes made in dealing with the history of German philosophy of the end of the 18th, and the beginning of the 19th centuries, leading to a one-sided and incorrect evaluation of the significance of the philosophy of Hegel, and the glossing over, in essence, of criticism of its conservative sides. Similar distortions in the field of philosophy were confusing readers and acting as a brake in the unmasking of fascist ideology.

It was thus that the Central Committee was engaged in the comprehensive elaboration of ideological questions. In its decisions, it aimed Party organizations and all the Soviet people at an implacable struggle against nationalistic distortions, against religious superstitions and idealism. The Party demanded that special attention be devoted to scientific and agitation and propaganda work in the treatment of questions dealing with the joint struggle of the peoples of Russia in the past, to the strengthening of the friendship of peoples, to propaganda on the history of the Communist Party and of Marxist-Leninist theory. These instructions of the Party had tremendous

significance in strengthening the friendship of the peoples of the USSR, in inculcating ardent Soviet patriotism. They aided in the mobilization of the moral forces of the people in the concluding stage of the war.

The chapter's sixth section is devoted to the victorious conclusion of the Great Patriotic War. It describes the events of the war leading to the unconditional surrender of Germany and, subsequently, to that of imperialist Japan. The material of this section tells clearly of the great liberative mission of the Red Army, of the decisive role of the Soviet Union in the victorious outcome of World War II.

The section calls attention to the characteristics of the line followed by the CPSU and the Soviet Government in the concluding stages of the Great Patriotic War, namely: to aid the peoples of Europe, freed from the tyranny of Hitler, in the reconstitution of their independent national governments; to provide complete freedom to those peoples in deciding the question of their state structure; to punish severely the chief war criminals; to establish an order in Europe which would fully eliminate the possibility of new aggression on the part of Germany; to establish long-range economic, political, and cultural cooperation among all peoples of Europe, based on mutual faith and mutual aid, with the aim of restoring the economy and culture of nations plundered by the Nazis.

The entrance of the Red Army onto the territory of European states was evoked by military necessity. The Soviet Union sought to bring the war to a conclusion through the decisive and total defeat of Fascist Germany, in order to establish a lasting peace in Europe. Foreign to the Soviet Union were any feelings of revenge against the peoples who had fought on the side of Hitler's Germany. In keeping with the noble principles of the USSR's foreign policy, the Red Army everywhere came forth as the saviour of the people from fascist enslavement, as the true friend of all working classes. Educated in the spirit of friendship between peoples, in the spirit of proletarian internationalism, the Red Army behaved with respect towards the freedom and independence of all peoples.

A different line was adhered to by the ruling circles of the USA and England. Their thoughts were aimed at blocking the Red Army's path into Europe, at not permitting the final defeat of reactionary forces in nations liberated from the fascist yoke. As an example, the authors of the textbook cite the case of Greece. The British Government, with the agreement of the Government of the United States, brought their forces into Greece only after the German fascist invaders had been defeated by the people's army of Greece, and used those forces to carry out reprisals against the patriots of the nation in the interests of Greek reactionary forces.

The mighty blows of the Red Army, the book says, as well as those of the forces of France, England, the USA, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia, Albania, and the units of the Rumanian, Bulgarian, and

Hungarian armies which joined them later, brought about the collapse of the German fascist state. Not having any more strength to resist, Germany was forced, in May 1945, to accept conditions calling for unconditional surrender. Within several months imperialist Japan was also forced to lay down its arms. The long-awaited peace for the peoples of the earth was at hand.

The outcome of the war brought to a disgraceful end the calculations of our enemies on the destruction or, at least, the weakening of the Soviet Union. Our socialist state survived with honor all the trials of war and emerged even stronger and more stable. The results of the Great Patriotic War fully confirmed the prophetic words of Lenin to the effect that "no matter what attempts are made to invade Russia..., and there will undoubtedly be not just one attempt, we have already become strengthened through our experience, and on the basis of actual experience know that all these attempts will crumble into dust. And we shall emerge from each of these attempts by our enemies stronger than we were before" (V. I. Lenin, Soch., Vol. 31, p 304).

World War II, the chief and decisive portion of which was the Great Patriotic War, led to a radical change in the relation of forces on the world scene. It sharpened and deepened the over-all crisis of capitalism, and led to the weakening of the entire capitalist system as a whole. Forever gone from the power of capital are the nations of the people's democracies, where the people now are successfully building socialism; liberated from imperialist dependency are many colonial peoples; considerably sharpened was the class struggle in the majority of capitalist nations.'

A study of Chapter 15 of the textbook shows convincingly that the victorious outcome of the Great Patriotic War was not the accident that bourgeois falsificators seek to portray it as. The authors of The History of the CPSU correctly emphasize that the victory was a natural result for a socialist state as a consequence of its advantages over nations of the bourgeois world. In this war, the Soviet Union demonstrated the great vital force of the Soviet social and state structure, the invincible might of the Soviet armed forces, and the grandeur and the wisdom of the heroic Communist Party.